

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method of linking a first plurality of clients connected to a packet-switched conferencing server to a second plurality of clients connected to a circuit-switched conferencing server, one or more of said first plurality of clients and said second plurality of clients being designated as an active speaker, the method comprising the steps of:

(1) establishing, by said packet-switched conferencing server, a connection to said circuit-switched conferencing server;

(2) designating said connection as an active speaker on said packet-switched conferencing server;

(3) receiving, over said connection, a first audio packet from said circuit-switched conferencing server, wherein said first audio packet is a mixture of packets received from each of the second plurality of clients who have been designated as an active speaker by said circuit-switched conferencing server;

(4) receiving, by said packet-switched conferencing server, a plurality of audio packets, wherein said plurality of audio packets comprises a second audio packet from each of the first plurality of clients who have been designated as an active speaker by said packet-switched conferencing server;

(5) forwarding, over said connection, said second audio packet to said circuit-switched conferencing server;

(6) mixing said first audio packet with said active speaker packets from the first plurality of clients into a composite packet; and

(7) forwarding said composite packet to each of the first plurality of clients connected to said packet-switched conferencing server;

whereby the first and second plurality of clients, using varying equipment and protocols, can simultaneously participate in a single audio conference application.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said composite packet is forwarded with
echo suppression.

1 3. A method of linking a first plurality of clients connected to a circuit-switched
2 conferencing server to a second plurality of clients connected to a packet-switched
3 conferencing server, comprising the steps of:

4 (1) establishing, by said circuit-switched conferencing server, a
5 connection to said packet-switched conferencing server;

6 (2) designating said connection as an active speaker on said circuit-
7 switched conferencing server;

8 (3) receiving, over said connection, a first audio packet from said packet-
9 switched conferencing server, wherein said first audio packet is a mixture of packets
10 received from each of the second plurality of clients who have been designated as
11 an active speaker by the said packet-switched conferencing server;

12 (4) receiving, by said circuit-switched conferencing server, a plurality of
13 audio packets, wherein said plurality of audio packets comprises a second audio
14 packet from each of the first plurality of clients who have been designated as an
15 active speaker by said circuit-switched conferencing server;

16 (5) mixing said first audio packet and said second audio packet into one
17 combined audio packet;

18 (6) forwarding said one combined audio packet to each of the first
19 plurality of clients connected to said circuit-switched conferencing server; and

20 (7) forwarding, over said connection, said second audio packet to said
21 packet-switched conferencing server;

22 whereby the first and second plurality of clients, using varying equipment and
23 protocols, can simultaneously participate in a single audio conference application.

1 4. A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having
2 control logic stored therein for causing a computer to connect a first plurality of
3 clients connected to a packet-switched conferencing server to a second plurality of
4 clients connected to a circuit-switched conferencing server, said control logic
5 comprising:

6 first computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
7 establish, by said packet-switched conferencing server, a connection to said circuit-
8 switched conferencing server;

9 second computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
10 designate said connection as an active speaker on said packet-switched conferencing
11 server;

12 third computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
13 receive, over said connection, a first audio packet from said circuit-switched
14 conferencing server, wherein said first audio packet is a mixture of packets received
15 from each of the second plurality of clients who have been designated as an active
16 speaker by said circuit-switched conferencing server;

17 fourth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
18 forward said first audio packet to each of the first plurality of clients connected to
19 said packet-switched conferencing server;

20 fifth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
21 receive, by said packet-switched conferencing server, a plurality of audio packets,
22 wherein said plurality of audio packets comprises a second audio packet from each
23 of the first plurality of clients who have been designated as an active speaker by said
24 packet-switched conferencing server; and

25 sixth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
26 forward, over said connection, said second audio packet to said circuit-switched
27 conferencing server;

28 whereby the first and second plurality of clients, using varying equipment and
29 protocols, can simultaneously participate in a single audio conference application.

1 5. A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having
2 control logic stored therein for causing a computer to connect a first plurality of
3 clients connected to a circuit-switched conferencing server to a second plurality of
4 clients connected to a packet-switched conferencing server, said control logic
5 comprising:

6 first computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
7 establish, by said circuit-switched conferencing server, a connection to said packet-
8 switched conferencing server;

9 second computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
10 designate said connection as an active speaker on said circuit-switched conferencing
11 server;

12 third computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
13 receive, over said connection, a first audio packet from said packet-switched
14 conferencing server, wherein said first audio packet is a mixture of packets received
15 from each of the second plurality of clients who have been designated as an active
16 speaker by the said packet-switched conferencing server;

17 fourth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to
18 receive, by said circuit-switched conferencing server, a plurality of audio packets,
19 wherein said plurality of audio packets comprises a second audio packet from each
20 of the first plurality of clients who have been designated as an active speaker by said
21 packet-switched conferencing server;

22 fifth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to mix
23 said first audio packet and said second audio packet into one combined audio packet;

sixth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to forward said one combined audio packet to each of the first plurality of clients connected to said circuit-switched conferencing server; and

seventh computer readable program code means for causing the computer to forward, over said connection, said second audio packet to said packet-switched conferencing server;

whereby the first and second plurality of clients, using varying equipment and protocols, can simultaneously participate in a single audio conference application.